



# Congressman Tim Bishop

*FIRST DISTRICT -- NEW YORK*

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **BISHOP VOTES FOR LANDMARK LOBBYING REFORM BILL**

*Final House-Senate agreement passes House*

WASHINGTON, DC—Today, by an overwhelming vote of 411-8, the House of Representatives passed tough legislation designed to end the culture of corruption and restore accountability in Washington. The final House-Senate agreement on the Honest Leadership, Open Government Act of 2007 (S. 1) ends the tight-knit relationship between lobbyists and lawmakers, and takes another major step toward making the 110th Congress the most open, honest Congress in history. The bill now goes back to the Senate for final action before being sent to the President.

“The people are once again in charge of the people’s House with this legislation,” said Bishop. “As a longtime advocate of restoring integrity, transparency, and accountability in the way we do the people’s business, I am pleased to support this landmark legislation. It will make it easier for the public to hold elected officials accountable by providing better, more accessible information.”

### **Highlights of the Honest Leadership, Open Government Act of 2007:**

- **New transparency for lobbyist bundling campaign contributions:** For the first time, requires reporting on lobbyists who “bundle,” or collect campaign checks for Members of Congress. Requires the Member’s campaign to report if a lobbyist bundled more than \$15,000 in campaign contributions semiannually for that Member. Congressman Bishop was an original co-sponsor of related legislation.
- **Historic disclosure of other financial contributions to Members:** Increases disclosure of lobbyists’ contributions to lawmakers and entities controlled by lawmakers, including contributions to Members’ charities, to events or entities honoring members, contributions intended to pay the cost of a meeting or a retreat, and contributions to Presidential library funds.
- **Expands public disclosure of lobbyist activities:** Doubles the frequency of the disclosure of Lobbyists’ Reports to four times a year. Establishes an online, searchable public database of lobbyist disclosure information. Requires lobbyists to disclose past executive branch and Congressional employment. Prohibits lobbyists from giving gifts and travel in violation of House and Senate rules. Increases criminal and civil penalties for violating the Lobby Disclosure Act to \$200,000 and five years in prison.

- **Ending conflicts of interest and strengthening restrictions on post congressional employment:** Requires sitting Members to disclose job negotiations for post-Congressional employment and to recuse themselves for purposes of a conflict of interest. It also strengthens the revolving door banning Senators from lobbying their colleagues for two years. Requires Members to prohibit their staff from having any official contact with the Members' lobbyist spouse on behalf of the spouse's client.
- **Congressional Pension Accountability:** Denies taxpayer-funded pension benefits to Members of Congress convicted of corruption while serving the American people.
- **Expands public disclosure of Members' travel and finances:** Establishes an online, searchable public database of Member travel and personal financial disclosure forms.
- **Disclosure of stealth lobbying:** Closes a loophole in current law that permits coalitions -- such as the one that funded the extensive "Harry and Louise" ad campaign that targeted health care legislation in 1993-94 -- to avoid disclosing their clients.

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